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THE STAR DRAMA.

AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

A Drama in Three Acts.

BY T. S. DENISON.

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T. S. DENISON.

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AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

A DRAMA,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

T. S. DENISON,

AUTHOR OF

*"Odds with the Enemy," "Initiating a Granger," "Wanted, a Correspondent,"
"A Family Strike," "Seth Greenback," "Hans Von Smash," "Borrow-
ing Trouble," "Two Ghosts in White," "The Pull-Back," "Coun-
try Justice," "The Assessor," "The Sparkling Cup,"
"Louva the Pauper," "Our Country," "The School-
Ma'am," "The Kansas Immigrants," "The
Irish Linen Peddler," "Is the
Editor In?" Etc.*

CHICAGO.

T. S. DENISON.

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CHARACTERS.

MR. HARVEY.
EDITH HARVEY, his daughter.
JAMES TUTTLE.
CHARLES FOREST, alias Wilson.
NICK BOONE, }
SALLIE SIMMONS, } Servants of Harvey.
BRYER, a grasping landlord.
LITTLE ETTA FOREST.

Time of representation, 1 hour 15 minutes.

COSTUMES.

Modern, and to suit the character.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R means right, as the actor faces the audience. *L* left; *C* center.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I.—Edith's spoiled disposition shown. Tuttle vs. Forest. Tuttle has the father's preference, but Forest wins. Nick Boone's views of modern matrimony. Forest reveals himself. Edith driven from home by her father.

ACT II.—Poverty and suffering. Forest a drunkard. Attempted reconciliation by Harvey. He is driven from the house by Forest. Nick, Tuttle and Forest. The deadly assault. Flight of the Forests.

ACT III.—The hard landlord. Wretchedness and suffering of Mrs. Forest and Sallie. Timely interference of Nick. Return of the absent one and reconciliation.

AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

ACT 1.

SCENE.—*Harvey's parlor, elegantly furnished, easy chairs, center-table, sofa, pictures, etc. Sallie discovered arranging furniture.*

Edith. (*Entering L.*) Sallie, did you see the dressmaker?

Sallie. No, Miss Edith; she was not in.

Edith. Why did you not wait?

Sallie. I didn't think you were so particular about your new dress as that.

Edith. What right have servants to *think* for their mistresses? I told you to wait and tell Mrs. James that I must have that dress to-morrow.

Sallie. I beg pardon, Miss Edith, Mr. Harvey told me to hurry home.

Edith. (*Impatiently.*) Pshaw! I do wish pa would quit giving orders about things he can't understand. Sallie, you have not put the vase of flowers on the table yet; you know I always want fresh flowers.

Sallie. Miss Edith, I forgot them, I have been so busy all day; I will get them at once.

Edith. Forgot them! How stupid you are. It is too late now to get them to-day. The gardener has gone home. (*Exit R.*)

Sallie. Miss Edith gets peevish beyond endurance. She has her own way until she's clear spoilt. (*Enter Nick, L.*) It makes me feel contrary too. (*Dusts furniture snappishly.*)

Nick. That's just what I have always told you, Sallie.

Sallie. It don't matter to *you* if it is so.

Nick. Haven't I always told you that you are a little bit stubborn, and haven't you just now owned up, eh?

Sallie. Nick Boone, do stop your teasing. This house would try the patience of a saint.

Nick. Walls damp, eh? or are the chimneys smoking again?

Sallie. Oh, it isn't the walls nor the chimneys. It is the *people*, yourself among them. I'm made a martyr of by everybody.

Nick. Indeed! What is a martyr, Miss Simmons? Oh, yes! I know! If a fellow gets an idea into his head and you can't reason him out of it he's *stubborn*, but if you try to singe it out of him with a hot poker, then he's a *martyr*.

Sallie. (With contempt.) Humph! No danger then, of your being a martyr.

Nick. I'm approaching one, Sallie. (Puts his arm around her waist.)

Sallie. (Quickly eluding him.) Ha! ha! you're not quite fit to join the ranks of the martyrs just yet.

Nick. An unworthy candidate! (Aside.) All a martyr needs is perseverance. A little soft soap will help matters. (Aloud.) Sallie, it is a shame that Miss Edith is so all-fired hard to please.

Sallie. You don't have to please her very often.

Nick. No, not often! It is not pleasant to have to please any woman often.

Sallie. You mean thing!

Nick. Sallie, you were just complaining of her.

Sallie. Can't I complain when I please?

Nick. You're just right! I don't blame a good-looking girl for complaining a little. (Aside.) She's mad, but soft soap will fetch her round.

Sallie. (Coyly approaching Nick.) Nick, it is provoking the way Miss Edith acts. Mr. Harvey spoils her in everything.

Nick. Of course he does. He ought to know better. Sallie, if you weren't such a good-tempered, nice girl, you couldn't get along with her at all.

Sallie. (Approaches Nick. He puts his arm round her waist.) Well, I think it is not everyone that could get along with her. I like her though, don't you?

Nick. I'd give all I have in this world to keep her from sorrow, but I pity the man who marries her.

Sallie. Why?

Nick. He'll have a tough time of it.

Sallie. She will have lots of money.

Nick. And knows how to make it fly, Sallie. She will spend the money and the burden will be on him. He'll have to drudge to keep up his income. He'll have to get new servants every week, for the old ones won't stay. The furnaces will always be too hot or too cold. He'll never get to dinner at the right time. He'll talk too much or too little, or not at all. He'll soon wish he was in—

Sallie. Nick!!

Nick. In a state of bachelorhood! Just as most fellows do who try matrimony on the modern plan.

Sallie. On the modern plan! What is that?

Nick. Well, it would take some time to explain that plan, so I'll just give you a sort of bill of particulars, as it were. You see in the first place the man must have stamps.

Sallie. Postage stamps?

Nick. (With a drawl of feigned contempt.) No, stamps! same thing as tin, you know.

Sallie. (With prudish air.) Oh, Nick; I do wish you wouldn't talk slang. You know I don't understand it.

Nick. Oh, you don't! Well, you ought to get acquainted with it. It is the rising generation of the English language. Like most boys, it's a little off in its young days. Well, as I said, the man must have *stamps*. No difference what he *has n't* got if he has stamps. Then he must have a span of fine horses and a footman and a headman, and all the rest of them fellows, male and female. Then he must rent a front pew in the biggest church in town, and a box in the Opera House. Them's luxuries. Then he must have a few necessities of life, so he subscribes to the Driving Park.

Sallie. Nick, when are going to stop, anyway?

Nick. Oh, I'll wind up on the domestic duties. Home, sweet home! There's no place like home. The man has to pound carpets till he can't lift a broom-handle anylonger, and break his back lifting stoves and setting them in a new place and risk his neck on a step-ladder hanging chromos that cost ten cents a dozen, and so forth. Well, when company comes he has to trot down town after a fresh beef steak. When he gets that he has to trot back after coffee, and next time he trots after a general assortment.

Sallie. Why, his duties must be chiefly *trotting*, Nick.

Nick. You're just right! He keeps trotting lively if you count trotting the baby. It's risky; that's why I don't intend to marry.

Sallie. (*Quickly withdrawing from Nick.*) Oh, you don't intend to marry?

Nick. (*Aside.*) Hang it, I said too much. (*Aloud.*) I meant not right away. (*Aside.*) I'll try a little more soft soap. (*Aloud.*) Now, with such a girl as yourself, Sallie, marriage would be a very different thing.

Sallie. (*Coquettishly.*) Would it?

Nick. Yes; you are a jewel, you are a moss-agate, a diamond, an angel, a—

Sallie. Humph! a regular prize package, eh?

Nick. Yes, a prize package. I couldn't think of the word, I—

Sallie. Nick Boone. (*Nick stops suddenly.*)

Nick. What?

Sallie. *Taffy* won't go down!

Nick. (*Feigning surprise.*) *Taffy!* Sallie! that overcomes me! I feel short of breath. I thought you didn't understand slang.

Sallie. I was just quoting you. I suppose it is the same as *soft soap*, which you use pretty often.

Nick. No; I always use *hard soap*. Soft soap is entirely out of date. It isn't genteel.

Sallie. You seem to study the slang dictionary.

Nick. Yes. I'm fitting myself for a home missionary. (*Sallie slaps Nick.*) I'll present the other check. (*Turns his head.*)

Sallie. Well you may. You've plenty of it.

Nick. Let's go on with our gymnastics. You see when soft soap won't stick you must try taffy, that sticks a little better.

Sallie. You needn't try it any more, Nick. It won't stick. Help me fold this shawl. (*They take opposite ends of a large shawl. Nick twists the shawl as often as Sallie tries to straighten it.*)

Sallie. What are you doing?

Nick. Trying to find the right side. Now I have it. Here, Sallie, take hold of these corners and you have it. (*Sallie takes the shawl and Nick steals a kiss. Enter Edith, R. Sallie screams. Edith stands in silence, looking at them.*)

Edith. Nick, the temperature of this room is entirely too high. Attend to the furnaces.

Nick. It is a little warm here. Sallie, don't you feel uncomfortable?

Sallie. (*Snappishly.*) You're a dunce. (*Exit Sallie, R., Nick, L.*)

Edith. (*Seating herself listlessly.*) Oh, dear! how tired I get of receiving company. It is a constant round of stale compliments, and vapid commonplaces. It is such a bore. If one could only go to balls and parties all the time! (*Enter Harvey, L.*)

Harvey. Ah, daughter, alone, I see.

Edith. Yes, father. It's a relief to be alone occasionally. I hate to wear a society mask all the time.

Harvey. (*Laughs.*) Edith, don't wear a mask at all. Be the same at home and abroad.

Edith. Oh, pa, it does well enough to *talk* so, but you know most people are different at home from what they are in society.

Harvey. Yes; they are models of propriety in company, and unbearable shrews in their families.

Edith. Pa, you are not scolding, are you?

Harvey. No, darling. I didn't think of scolding my pet.

Edith. You are too kind for that, good, dear papa. (*Places her arm round his neck.*) You wouldn't scold your pet, would you?

Harvey. No. I'll never *scold* you, Edith. Haven't I always granted your slightest wishes?

Edith. Oh, you are so good, it is a pleasure to you to grant favors.

Harvey. Edith, you claim a double portion, yea the whole of my existence. You are all that is most precious to me. There *was* one who I hoped would be a son to me and a brother to you.

Edith. (*Laughs.*) Pa, if I fill two places, I should have the privileges of two.

Harvey. Edith, you are at times a trifle too exacting. Take heed in time.

Edith. Why, what do you mean, father?

Harvey. I have never refused you a request, and never de-

manded the slightest sacrifice. You are old enough to guess for yourself.

Edith. I suppose so! Oh, pa, that ball of Mrs. Garvin's will be splendid. My new ball dress will surprise some of the bon ton.

Harvey. Pshaw! So that is your highest aim—to surprise the bon ton with a new dress! (*Paces the floor. A pause.*) I saw Mr. Tuttle to-day.

Edith. Indeed!

Harvey. He will call here this evening.

Edith. (*Slightly impatient.*) That is not very surprising news.

Harvey. He is an excellent young man. I esteem him as a true gentleman.

Edith. Certainly! He is a gentleman.

Harvey. I am much interested in his success in life. (*Exit R.*)

Edith. (*Musing.*) Father's words admit but one meaning. I suppose I must be married sometime. That seems, after all, to be woman's sphere that we hear so much about. I am rich, and a prominent member of society, so there is nothing else for me to do. Work, however respectable, would disgrace me with my set, and really I suppose work is not easy. Everybody thinks so. Tuttle is dull, and always talking *business*. Mr. Forest is so nice, and he waltzes exquisitely. Well, I *will* choose for myself. (*Door bell rings.*) That is Mr. Tuttle. I must dispose of him, for Mr. Forest intends to call. (*Nick shows Tuttle in L.*)

Edith. Good evening, Mr. Tuttle. Take a seat.

Tuttle. Good evening, Miss Harvey. (*Seating himself.*) I took the liberty of dropping in this evening. I hope I do not interfere with any engagement.

Edith. I'm very sorry, Mr. Tuttle! I have an engagement. Will you step into the library and visit with father?

Tuttle. I had hoped to have a few minutes' chat with you.

Edith. Oh, I am at liberty for a *short* time.

Tuttle. A few words will tell my story. Miss Harvey, we have been acquainted for years. You know that I have not been indifferent to the charms of your society. Will you be my wife?

Edith. Mr. Tuttle, this is very sudden!

Tuttle. I could not longer endure this suspense.

Edith. Mr. Tuttle, you are a grave man of business, and I am a gay butterfly of society.

Tuttle. I have considered it all. I have the means to maintain your position in society. Beneath the gay exterior of the butterfly I see the sterling qualities of a true woman.

Edith. Thank you for the compliment, Mr. Tuttle, but I fear we should be an ill-assorted pair.

Tuttle. Miss Harvey, I know you are fond of society, and that I am not, but time would probably bring us nearer together.

Edith. Let us not repeat the mistakes of others. It is impossible.

Tuttle. Don't say *impossible*. I hate that word. Think over this. I will wait for a final answer.

Edith. Mr. Tuttle— (*Enter Harvey suddenly R.*)

Harvey. Good evening, Mr. Tuttle, I'm very glad to see you. (*They are seated.*)

Edith. Mr. Tuttle, and papa please excuse me. (*Exits, R.*)

Harvey. How are the markets, Tuttle.

Tuttle. About the same as yesterday.

Harvey. Mr. Tuttle, I am glad you have called this evening. An impression I received on entering the room just now leads me to speak with you on a matter about which I think we have an understanding. With my consent you have long wooed my daughter, but I have not used my influence with either you or her to bring about a marriage. Edith is a girl of strong impulses. You are a tardy suitor. Speak out plainly, and at once, or your cause is in danger.

Tuttle. I realize, Mr. Harvey, that it is in danger. Impor-tunity will not strengthen it.

Harvey. Urge the case. Hearts, like forts, may be taken by storm.

Tuttle. Ah, Mr. Harvey, you little know your daughter if you think she can be won by such means.

Harvey. Hang it, my boy, she *must* marry you. I hold the balance of power. She dare not refuse to do my bidding.

Tuttle. Mr. Harvey, I will never be a party to coercive measures. A forced marriage is an abomination and a desecration of the most sacred of human ties. No honorable man would enter into such a union.

Harvey. With the home you can furnish, she would soon become a happy wife. She is fond of style.

Tuttle. Money can do many things, but it cannot purchase domestic happiness. It can adorn the haughty bosom with sparkling diamonds, but it can not light the eyes of beauty with the glance of affection or wreath the smile of love on rosy lips. No: the price of these is love,—the love of a pure woman for the man of her choice. Money can lay your floors with velvety piles of rarest texture, and adorn your walls with beautiful works of art, but it cannot place love's sweet welcome at the threshold. All the mines of the great West can not bring peace to aching hearts mismatched, who strive to conceal from a cold world the ugly skeleton of discord by veiling it in the poor drapery of outward affection. Such risks are too great to be assumed lightly.

Harvey. Urge your suit! She'll love you by and by. The visits of that Forest are becoming frequent of late. I don't like him. There is a mystery about his antecedents. Nobody knows who he is. I have heard some rumors that he is a gambler and addicted to drink. I believe you know him, Tuttle?

Tuttle. Yes! but silence becomes me best.

Harvey. I appreciate your delicacy. I shall find it out elsewhere. Edith shall never marry that man and call herself my child. (*Bell rings.*) There is a caller! Come into the library where we shall not be disturbed. (*Exeunt R, as Nick enters. Nick goes to door L, and ushers in Forest.*)

Forest. Is Miss Harvey at home?

Nick. She is; I will call her.

Forest. Hold a minute, Nick. I would like to ask you a few questions.

Nick. Would you like to have them answered?

Forest. Do you think I would ask them if I didn't?

Nick. I only thought you might be more careful what you asked.

Forest. (*With a sneer.*) Humph! You mean to answer if you please.

Nick. That's about my position on the subject.

Forest. (*Getting angry.*) Fellow, I see you know about what I want to ask. Somebody has been circulating evil reports about my character.

Nick. (*Taunting.*) Well that's naughty. They oughtn't to do it. I feel for you.

Forest. (*Angrily.*) Nick Boone, you try to play the fool, but you can't hide the knave.

Nick. I don't think you're worth hiding.

Forest. Villain! I'd break every bone in your body if it was worth while.

Nick. It isn't worth while. Just give me plenty of the stuff you had when I saw you at the races, and I'll be as limp as if I hadn't a bone in my body. (*Staggers round and imitates a drunken man. Forest strikes at Nick, who dodges.*)

Forest. Oh! I forgot where I was.

Nick. (*Coolly.*) Well, that is hardly a sufficient apology. But I'll accept it. (*Waves hand deprecatingly.*) You were *hasty*. I'm of a very equable temper. I rise superior to circumstances. I say, Forest, did you ever see anybody rise superior to circumstances?

Forest. Heavens! I'll—

Nick. There now, don't! Keep cool. Let's take an example of what I mean. Suppose the pet monkey gets your best cravat on just as you want it, when you're already too late for the party. You chase him round the house with the boot-jack; that's the circumstances. Well, when the monkey runs up the lightning-rod with the cravat to the top of the chimney, and makes faces at you, he rises superior to circumstances.

Forest. Scoundrel! I will hit you!

Nick. (*Suddenly dropping his humorous tone and assuming an air of dignity.*) Mr. Forest, no man can call me a scoundrel. You call yourself a gentleman. I am a gentleman too, if I am a servant.

Forest. Then why did you circulate stories about me?

Nick. When a man asks me civilly I'll tell him civilly. Suppose I had told Mr. Harvey that I saw you drunk, and that you gamble. If you had a child and such a man wanted to marry her, wouldn't you thank anybody for telling the whole truth?

Forest. Nick, I am trying to reform.

Nick. I'll be the last man to hinder you.

Forest. I wish to see Tuttle. (*Nick goes to door R to call T.*) I must strike now, or the prize is lost. (*Enter Tuttle, R.*)

Tuttle. Good evening, Forest. We seldom meet lately.

Forest. Some of my former friends choose to avoid me.

Tuttle. Forest, sit down and let us talk this matter over. I have never avoided you; I *have* avoided the company you keep.

Forest. Every man has the right to choose his associates. I don't blame you. I did hope that my old comrades would not say any more than was necessary about the little freaks I, for a time, indulged in. Reporting what a man once did after he is trying to do better, looks like striking a man when he is down.

Tuttle. Forest, you are mistaken; I have never said a word to any one on that subject.

Forest. Some one has. Mr. Harvey's family seem to know a great deal about my affairs.

Tuttle. Forest, you are wrong in your suspicion. There is no use mincing words. We are rivals. I never would injure a former friend, much less advance my own interests by blackening the name of a rival. You confided to me your love for Edith Harvey, when you must have known that I loved her. You knew your revelation would seal my lips. Whether it was fair or not, I leave you to judge. I have never stooped to peddle secrets. (*Rises to leave.*)

Forest. Mr. Tuttle, you think me suspicious and unjust. I have had bitter wrongs of which you know nothing. I was forced by circumstances to be your rival. You can not understand it now. You will sometime. I have signed the pledge, and am trying to do right.

Tuttle. May God help you to stand firm.

Forest. My wrongs have made me suspicious. Will you think of me as one *trying* to do right?

Tuttle. I will. (*They shake hands. Exit Tuttle, L.*)

Forest. It is hard to be forced into such a position, but I am playing for high stakes and must win. (*Enter Nick, R.*)

Nick. Mr. Forest, shall I announce to Miss Edith that you have called?

Forest. If you please! (*Nick bows and exits R.*) It is a desperate move, but time admits of no delay. The girl is already won. I will appeal to Mr. Harvey, and disclose all. He cheated me out of my mother's inheritance. I'll win his daughter before they know who I am, and then I'll get the money still, for he can't refuse her. With Edith for my wife, I shall feel a ten-fold

power to resist temptation. She will be true as steel. (*Enter Edith, L.*)

Edith. Ah! Mr. Forest. Aren't you ashamed to fail in keeping your appointments punctually?

Forest. I was detained on a matter of business with a gentleman.

Edith. Aha! so you prefer the society of a gentleman to that of a lady.

Forest. I said I was talking business.

Edith. Now, Mr. Forest, don't get to talking business. It is so stupid. (*They take seats.*)

Forest. Especially on a moonlight evening.

Edith. I do hope this delightful weather will not change until after Mrs. Garvin's ball. That will be a splendid affair. I shall enjoy it, I know. Won't you?

Forest. I don't know. That depends on you.

Edith. On me? Why?

Forest. Because my happiness is in your hands.

Edith. I'm afraid it's in poor hands. (*Laughs.*)

Forest. Seriously, Edith, will you make me happy for life?

Edith. Charles, you are jesting.

Forest. No, Edith. A plain question need not be masked by idle approaches.

Edith. Charles, I must ask you a question. I have heard that you are addicted to strong drink. I hope this is not true. I never would marry a drunkard.

Forest. Dear Edith, with shame I confess that I have at times taken more wine than was good for me. But I never reeled in the street, or was picked out of the gutter, and carried home, as my enemies reported. I never got so low as that.

Edith. I'm so glad you didn't. That would be so ungentleel. I never believed that, though a former friend of yours told me.

Forest. (*Quickly.*) Has Tuttle done that? He has turned traitor to a friend.

Edith. Charles, don't be hasty. It was another friend who told me. Mr. Tuttle is too much of a gentleman to say a word against you.

Forest. Edith, I have suffered bitter wrongs. Men have tried to ruin me. I have pledged myself never to taste another drop of intoxicating liquor. In your presence I renew that solemn promise. With your aid I should be strong to resist all temptation. I await an answer.

Edith. I believe you, Charles.

Forest. Mine! (*Clasps her in his arms, L. C. A pause.*) Dearest Edith, I feel that all must be clear between us. I have a revelation to make.

Edith. (*Starting.*) A revelation!

Forest. Do not be alarmed! It is nothing. My name was

not always Forest. I am Charles Wilson, son of your father's first wife.

Edith. (*Greatly agitated.*) You Charles Wilson? I cannot understand it! Why have you never told me this?

Forest. Don't think me a deceiver. I thought it best. Your father drove me away from home years after my mother's death, when you were a little girl. He and I never could agree. He was set against me. He kept the property which belonged to my mother, and rightfully was mine.

Edith. Then you would have been my brother.

Forest. Thank fortune, I missed a brother's place that I might be something dearer. Edith, do you forgive me?

Edith. Oh, Charles, you surprise me so. I hardly know what to think. I trust you. You must have good reasons for this. But please don't judge papa harshly. He was severe with you. But he will not withhold from you what is yours. He intends to leave that money all to you, if you shall only prove worthy of it. But he must not know of this. He would say it was deception.

Forest. There can be no better time than this to seek reconciliation.

Edith. Oh, not now! Papa will not consent. Don't ask him.

Forest. Charles Wilson may yet—(*Enter Harvey suddenly, L.*)

Edith. (*Screams.*) All is lost!

Harvey. Forest, what does this mean? I heard the name Charles Wilson.

Forest. It means, Mr. Harvey, that I have won the love of your daughter. Will you give your consent to our union?

Harvey. Never!

Forest. Listen a moment, Mr. Harvey!

Harvey. I know you have a specious tongue, but don't think you can win me as easily as you have that foolish girl.

Edith. Father, this is my own free choice. No specious arguments have been used to influence my decision.

Harvey. So much the worse, headstrong girl, when you choose one unworthy of yourself without asking a father's advice. This is a poor return, girl, for all my kindness. I will not allow it.

Forest. Mr. Harvey, will you hear a few words from me?

Harvey. You are unworthy of my daughter. No words can alter that fact.

Forest. I will make myself worthy of her.

Harvey. I prefer that my daughter shall have a husband who has always been a man of honor. Reformed drunkards seldom hold out.

Edith. Father! Father! You are cruel.

Harvey. Child, truth is stronger than idle sentiment.

Forest. Mr. Harvey, I will win your esteem. Do you know me? I am Charles Wilson!

Harvey. (*Starting suprised.*) What! Did I hear aright? (*Brief pause.*) Yes; I recognize now something familiar in that face that I could not account for before. So Charles; you have given up dissipation to play the smooth-tongued hypocrite, have you?

Forest. Mr. Harvey, though I deserve censure, have I no claim upon you?

Harvey. After you have atoned for years of misconduct by years of useful, honest effort, then come to me, and I will listen to your claims. (*Rings impatiently.*) A servant will show you out, Mr. Forest.

Edith. Then I will go with him.

Harvey. Silly girl! I forbid your communicating again in any manner with this person.

Edith. Is that the way to win the erring?

Harvey. Girls should not be reformers! (*Enter Nick, R.*) Forest, leave this house at once.

Edith. Remember I go too!

Harvey. Girl, beware! I will not be trifled with.

Edith. And I will marry the man of my own choice.

Harvey. Then you are no longer my child. Go and starve with the hero of your own imagination. (*Calls Nick, R.*) Nick, show this fellow out.

Edith. And me too!

Harvey. Edith, don't plunge yourself into this dark abyss. Recall this hasty determination.

Edith. Better true love and poverty, than such a home as you would see me enter.

Harvey. (*In a broken voice.*) Nick, take her in the carriage wherever she wishes to go.

Nick. Mr. Harvey!—

Harvey. (*In tone of anguish.*) No! no! I know her will! I am childless! (*Covers his face with his hands. Edith leans her face on Forest's shoulder. Nick has handkerchief to his face.*)

DISPOSITION OF CHARACTERS.

L, FOREST, EDITH. C, HARVEY. NICK R.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Scantily furnished lodgings. Ricketty chairs and plain table. Edith discovered as curtain rises sewing. She is poorly dressed, and looks careworn. Enter Forest, R. He bears marks of recent dissipation.*

Forest. Edith, I am going down town, and I want some money.

Edith. Husband, I have no money to give you.

Forest. (*In severe tone.*) What do you do with all the money your stingy old father sends you? Hasn't Nick Boone been here lately with a stock of pennies and old shop-worn clothing?

Edith. The little help Nick brings us is all expended for the necessaries of life. It is but little.

Forest. Precious little! A fine specimen of a gentleman your father is. Why don't he pay me what he owes me, and I shouldn't need his miserly help.

Edith. Charles, you too owe a debt!

Forest. Several of them if the neighbors don't lie. They've sent bills enough.

Edith. Your greatest debt is to yourself and to your family.

Forest. There now! Next thing you'll be sniffing. I can't stand a crying woman. (*Starts toward L.*)

Edith. (*Interposes.*) Charles, please don't go down town today. Avoid the tempter.

Forest. Indeed! You would have me stay at home and listen to your growling and fretting all day. (*Starts. She lays her hand on his arm.*)

Edith. Charles, think of the ruin that is before you.

Forest. (*Laughs.*) Yes, I see it. (*Looks at her.*) (*Throws her rudely aside.*) Don't try to detain me. I know what I'm doing. (*Pushes her rudely aside. Exit L.*)

Edith. (*Drops into a chair weeping.*) Nothing can satiate this demon of drink. Our slender means are exhausted, and the family honor tarnished. I never thought it possible that my husband's really noble nature could sink so low. Is it not enough that he should cease to love! No, the victim of alcohol stays not his hand from helpless loved ones. (*Enter Sallie, R.*)

Sallie. What is the matter now, Mrs. Forest?

Edith. Charles has gone!

Sallie. And took the money you got for that sewing, I suppose?

Edith. He took that yesterday, and lost it at play. He is mad to retrieve his losses.

Sallie. Well, I wouldn't give him a cent! If he must drink and gamble, let him earn his own money. We work hard enough to earn ours.

Edith. Since he lost his place as salesman, he has become almost savage. I dare not refuse him anything. He will come home maddened with drink, and I almost fear him.

Sallie. What's going to become of us all, I'd like to know?

Edith. Sallie, take my advice and go back to my father's. You know he said you could come back at any time.

Sallie. I'm not going back till he takes you too. I told him so.

Edith. Sallie, you are unwise! Leave me! The pittance father sends is not much, but it will keep us from starvation. It is all I deserve for disobeying the kindest of parents.

Sallie. (*Aside.*) If she only knew where that pittance comes from. (*Aloud.*) No, Mrs. Forest; I will stay with you. You may yet need my help worse than now. (*Enter Nick, L.*)

Nick. Good morning, ladies! All well?

Edith. No, Nick. My little Etta has caught a severe cold.

Nick. (*Producing from bundle a thick new shawl.*) Mrs. Forest, this will be good for her cold.

Edith. Oh, this is so kind, Nick; how can I express my thanks?

Nick. I don't know! Just lump them, I guess.

Edith. It is so opportune. I had begun to be alarmed about my darling. But she shall suffer no more these chilly nights. I will put it over her at once. (*Exit, R.*)

Nick. She looks careworn! Is the old 'un cuttin' up again?

Sallie. Humph! He's always cuttin' up. He's a beast.

Nick. Now, Sallie, don't be too hard on the "male sect." See here! I've something for you, too. (*Produces another shawl.*)

Sallie. Oh, isn't that nice. (*Reaches to take it.*)

Nick. Wait a minute! Let me put it on you. Stand up straight! (*Places shawl over her shoulders, and suddenly steals a kiss with a loud smack.*)

Sallie. (*Feigning anger.*) Go 'way, you awkward booby!

Nick. It was a little awkward, but it sounded all right.

Sallie. Nick Boone, will you always make a fool of yourself?

Nick. (*With mock solemnity.*) I will, Miss Simmons, when a chance like that offers.

Sallie. Don't call me *Miss* Simmons.

Nick. I'm ready to call you Sallie Boone any time you say so.

Sallie. And I shan't say so soon. I've seen enough of the men. Men are a nuisance.

Nick. Take your time, Sallie. Don't commit yourself.

Sallie. I don't want to impose on any man who thinks all the burdens of matrimony rest on the husband.

Nick. Well, never mind that. I've been imposed on so much that I begin to think I'd like it for a steady diet.

Sallie. Nick, you're a regular pest!

Nick. Well, then I'll be off. Does Mrs. Forest know that

Tuttle and I got these things instead of her father?

Sallie. She never suspects it.

Nick. Don't tell her. She wouldn't take them. Ta! ta! Tra la! la! (*Exit L.*)

Sallie. He's a man. He's no walking clothes dummy. Noble fellow! He gives his hard earnings to help a suffering woman, while the loafing lout who should be her protector, squanders his money on his own pleasures. Somehow this world is all out of balance, when such things go on every day and nobody thinks anything of them. (*Enter Harvey L.*)

Sallie. (*Starting.*) Mr. Harvey, I declare!

Harvey. Yes Sallie, I've suspected Nick for a good while, and now I've caught him at the very door. I know now what he does with his money. Has it really come to suffering!

Sallie. It has! Mr. Forest grows worse every day.

Harvey. I can't abandon my child to the heartlessness of such a wretch.

Sallie. You haven't heard half. He has even dared to strike her.

Harvey. Shame on the unfeeling wretch! She shall have a home with me. (*Enter Edith R.*)

Edith. Father! (*Falls into his arms.*)

Harvey. My poor child!

Edith. Father, you will forgive us at last?

Harvey. Dear Edith, I will forgive you. I cannot forgive the unfeeling man who has been so cruel to you.

Edith. Father, give him one more trial; he is my husband.

Harvey. He has betrayed every trust confided to him.

Edith. He is the father of my precious little Etta. Father, you have never seen Etta. I will bring her. (*Exit R.*)

Harvey. What a mysterious power the love of woman is! It is God's beacon light which burns brightest on shadowed paths to guide benighted footsteps back to virtue's simple ways. (*Enter Edith R, leading Etta.*)

Edith. Etta, here is your grandpa!

Etta. Grandpa, I'm glad to see you. I never saw you before.

Harvey. (*Takes the child in his arms.*) You precious little darling! (*Kisses her.*)

Etta. Papa used to kiss me and mamma too, but he don't any more. I guess he forgets.

Harvey. Never mind that, child, and I'll buy you something pretty. (*Enter L, Forest under the influence of liquor, but with tolerably good control of himself. The speech and the slight stagger should be just sufficient to show intoxication. Forest tries to be conciliatory.*)

Forest. How are you, Mr. Harvey? I'm glad to see you. I always thought you would get around to visit us sometime. (*They shake hands.*)

Harvey. Mr. Forest, perhaps you know why I have not called on you sooner, and why I come now?

Forest. Mr. Harvey, I *tried* hard to win your esteem, but failed.

Harvey. You began wrong. You thwarted my most cherished wishes. Years of self-denial were necessary.

Forest. I tried hard enough. Things that are easy to a rich may be very hard to a poor man.

Harvey. There is no excuse for a poor man's degrading his manhood.

Forest. Mr. Harvey, I'll try again.

Harvey. That is the same old story. I didn't come to hear it again.

Forest. (*Getting angry.*) You didn't, eh! I suppose you are afraid I'll ask you again for that money you keep that is rightfully mine.

Harvey. That money is legally mine. Your own mother wished it kept from your spendthrift fingers. I will still guard it for your family. Not a penny of it shall feed your vices.

Edith. Father, don't be too hard on the fallen! It may not be too late for a final effort.

Harvey. I hope he may try again.

Forest. You never helped me!

Edith. The weak need help! He earnestly tried to reform. I believe that help and encouragement then would have saved him.

Harvey. I will find your husband a place where he can earn a respectable living.

Forest. Old man, that isn't the kind of help I want. Give me my mother's money.

Harvey. No, Mr. Forest, I will find you employment.

Forest. (*Sneeringly.*) Mr. Harvey, you needn't take up a penny collection for me.

Harvey. Edith, I will give you and your child a home. Will you come with me?

Forest. I think not. She is my wife, and I'll have something to say about that.

Edith. Father, I pledged myself in better days to be true to Charles. I cannot abandon him in his hour of trial. Oh, Charles, listen to father's proposal! Think of our needs.

Forest. I'll beg of no man! Mr. Harvey, you needn't send Nick Boone here with any more old clothes.

Harvey. Nick Boone, is his own master. What he has done was done of his own accord.

Forest. (*Angrily.*) Then you didn't even send that pittance. Like a fool I gave you credit for generosity which you do not possess. (*More excitedly.*) You are an exacting, cruel old man.

Edith. Charles!

Forest. (*Menacingly.*) I won't be insulted! Harvey, leave my house! Set foot in it again at your own peril.

Edith. Father, go at once! (*Aside to II.*) He is becoming violent.

Harvey. Are you safe, child?

Forest. Are not you going before I lay hands on you? (*Moves toward II.* *Edith hurries Harvey out L.*)

Edith. Charles, please don't give way to anger.

Forest. Don't talk to me of anger, or it will be worse for you. Everybody's against me. The old miser! to rob a man and then taunt him with his poverty! (*Sees Sallie's shawl on a chair.*) What is this? Some of their rags! I'll burn it! No, it will buy a royal glass of brandy. (*Enter Sallie R.*)

Sallie. Mr. Forest, I'll thank you to lay down that shawl!

Forest. I guess not. This is my property. I've captured it and confiscated it, as the boys used to say.

Sallie. I tell you that shawl is mine, and I'm going to have it.

Forest. Look here, Sallie Simmons, that story hasn't any corporosity to speak of.

Sallie. Give me that shawl! (*Suddenly snatches the shawl from him.*)

Forest. Young lady, I'll settle your coffee some day when you get too sharp.

Sallie. You don't dare to lay hands on me. I'm not your wife!

Forest. Oh, I'm as glad of that as you are.

Etta. (*Enters R, with her new shawl on.*) Papa, see my pretty shawl!

Forest. Oho! dry goods are plenty! Etta, you don't need a shawl. You are too little. (*Attempts to take it. Edith interposes.*)

Etta. Don't papa! It's nice and warm!

Edith. For shame, Charles! have you no mercy, no compassion? (*F. attempts to take the shawl. Edith clasps the child in her arms.*)

Edith. You shall not take it. The child has suffered enough! (*F. seizes the shawl when Nick and Tuttle enter L. Nick seizes Forest and hurls him across the room.*)

Nick. Let go that shawl or I'll drop you.

Tuttle. (*Steps between them.*) Nick, you forget where you are!

Nick. He won't forget it, I guess.

Forest. Jim Tuttle, what brings you here?

Tuttle. I come as a friend!

Forest. A friend of whom?

Tuttle. Of the family!

Forest. (*With a sneer.*) Oh yes; you used to be a friend of part of the family years ago. You're not wanted here.

Tuttle. Forest, listen to an old friend. Friends are better than enemies. You have just turned one man away from your door with threats of violence.

Forest. And I'll turn out more of them. Jim Tuttle, you're not wanted here.

Edith. Mr. Tuttle, please go. My husband will think better of this sometime. (*Aside to T.*) It's no use to reason with him now.

Forest. I don't allow any man to interfere in my family affairs.

Tuttle. Mrs. Forest, if I can not serve you in any way I will go. I met your father on the street.

Forest. Oh, that's the game is it? He told you I was drunk, and you two came up to protect my family, eh?

Nick. Mr. Tuttle, it's no use to try to aid any one under the control of this man.

Forest. (*Furiously.*) So you've been *aiding* my family, Tuttle? You've sent presents to my wife, I suppose you have told her you still love her too. I'll teach you not to meddle with my affairs. (*Draws a large knife. Tuttle jumps back and Nick runs between them.*)

Forest. (*In a rage.*) Stand aside, Nick, or I'll let *you* have it. (*Nick seizes a small wooden stool and parries the blows. Forest presses him back, striking furiously. Tuttle attempts to interfere.*)

Edith. Mr. Tuttle, you are the object of his rage! Go at once! Husband! (*Rushes between F and Nick.*) Why do you pursue Nick? He has done you no harm. Mr. Tuttle is innocent. He will go at once.

Forest. (*Panting.*) He'd better go! (*Exit T., L.*) Nick, why did you stop me?

Nick. Forest, I didn't want to see murder.

Forest. (*Savagely.*) I did!

Edith. (*To Nick aside.*) Go! I'm in no danger!

Nick. Good day, Mr. Forest! No offense, I hope! (*Exits L.*)

Forest. Wife, has Tuttle been making you presents? Don't try to deceive me.

Edith. (*With pride.*) Have I ever deceived you?

Forest. Well, that's precisely what I am trying to find out, my lady.

Edith. Charles, there is a limit even to the patience of a suffering wife. I have never spoken with Mr. Tuttle since our marriage until to-day.

Forest. All right; if you say so, I guess it *is* so. I never thought you would lie. One thing is sure, Edith, we've got to get out of this.

Edith. Get out of here? What do you mean?

Forest. Tuttle and Boone will tell your father that your life is in danger, and then he'll send officers here to arrest me, and take you away. We'll go this evening! Get the things packed. We'll disappear awhile.

Edith. Charles, this is a foolish fear. If we do that we shall lose the few friends we have. Father wouldn't know where to find us.

Forest. That's just what I want. Come, be lively, and set Sallie to packing up, or I'll help you stir.

Edith. I don't wish to leave our neighbors.

Forest. You don't *wish* to leave the neighbors! What are *your* wishes! Must I give you a taste of something? (*Makes move to strike her.*)

Edith. Oh, don't, Charles! I will obey.

Forest. Humph! I think you'd better. (*Exit Edith, R.*) A little more abuse is what's needed. That will set the old man thinking, and open his eyes and his pocket-book. (*Sits down. Laughs.*) I'll fetch 'em round. Edith and Etta are worth \$50,000 to me, and not worth a cent to anybody else. I'll get it yet, too. I'd like to see the old man find them. I'm a trump! *I am!* (*Laughs long.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE—*Lodgings, very plainly furnished. Edith and Sallie discovered sewing.*

Sallie. I declare my arms are nearly breaking. I didn't think hand-sewing was such dreadful hard work. Oh, I'd like to choke that old scamp who came and took our sewing-machine away.

Edith. Sallie, you must learn to be patient. Nothing but patience can make our trials endurable.

Sallie. Mrs. Forest, don't talk to me of patience. You know my temper, and you know I couldn't help giving that old wretch a piece of my mind. Why didn't he wait a while for the monthly payment?

Edith. He had already waited two weeks, and we were still unable to pay him. He only did what his contract allowed him to do.

Sallie. (*Impatiently.*) Fiddlesticks to his contract! If he was a *man* he wouldn't take the bread out of the mouths of helpless women. We could only just make a living with the machine. How are we going to live without it?

Edith. I don't know. There has always been *some* way heretofore. We must wait.

Sallie. Mrs. Forest, you are the most patient, hopeful woman I ever knew. I can see no hope.

Edith. I was not always so. I have learned patience through years of bitter trial. First, I was an outcast from my father's home. Then came the terrible blow of my husband's downfall, and the gradual sinking of our darling Etta into her little grave. Still the measure meted to me was not full. Poor Charles's sudden disappearance left an agony of doubt that grew into a dread-

ful certainty. Rashly I abandoned a dear father's home, when I might have been just as true to a loved one without betraying the trust of a parent. The past has wrought its ruin; the future can be no worse.

Sallie. (A pause.) Has the postman passed yet?

Edith. Yes; there was no letter. I have given up all hope. I deeply wronged my father. Perhaps he will never forgive me.

Sallie. Why don't you write again?

Edith. Twice I have written to him. I can not ask again for what he has thus denied.

Sallie. Our rent must be raised to-day, or Mr. Bryer will throw us out. The old skinflint will be as good as his word, I know.

Edith. I fear so. We can't possibly get this lot of shirts done before Saturday evening. Do you think Mr. Spoyle would advance us a little money?

Sallie. If he did it would be the first favor he ever granted anybody. It would be no harm to ask him.

Edith. Sallie, please go at once and try, so that we may seek aid elsewhere if he refuses. (Exit Sallie, L.) My only friend left is that true-hearted, noble girl. To be thrown out into the streets to starve like wretched outcasts would be the climax of our misery. (Knocking L.) Come in! (Enter Bryer.)

Bryer. (In harsh, nasal voice.) You're sewin', I see, Mrs. Forest. Well, them that haven't money have got to work, and I just pitched into hard work and soon had a start. Where's that sassy gal you keep? Why isn't she at work too?

Edith. She has gone to the tailor's.

Bryer. Takin' home some work, I suppose. Then I guess you'll pay that rent pretty soon.

Edith. I will try to pay that this afternoon.

Bryer. You'll try to pay. I guess that won't do. It's money I want. I work hard myself for all I get. I can't build houses and let people live in them for nothing. What's this? (Picks up a little work box from the table.) You had better pay your debts than to buy such gimcracks as that. I couldn't afford that.

Edith. Oh, Mr. Bryer. That is the last thing I have that my father gave me. I'll pay you. Sallie has gone for money. I hope she'll get it from Mr. Spoyle.

Bryer. (Growsl.) I hope so too. If she don't you know what's coming. I'm a man of my word. Don't forget that. I'll be back in half an hour after the money or the furniture. (Exit L.)

Edith. What will become of us if Sallie should fail to get the money. Well there's no use worryin'. (Seats herself and sews. Enter Sallie L. She seats herself and takes up her sewing. Neither speaks for some time.)

Edith. What did he say?

Sallie. He said, "Not a cent till the work was all delivered." More than that, he said we needn't come for any more work. Times are so bad that the factory will run only a few hands.

Edith. Then we can fight the wolf no longer. Mr. Bryer will be here in half an hour for the furniture.

Sallie. He shan't have it. I'd like to see him take this furniture.

Edith. But he will take it. He has the law in his favor.

Sallie. Plague the law! It's only another way of strangling justice. (*Enter Bryer, L.*) I wish I was a man.

Bryer. Ha! ha! What would you do if you were a man?

Sallie. I'd be a man.

Bryer. Well, I guess you would have to be a *boy* first. There'll be plenty of men for a while yet. There wouldn't be one woman to a county though, if they could all get their wish.

Sallie. Yes, there's *plenty* of men, such as they are.

Bryer. Mrs. Forest, have you that money yet?

Edith. I couldn't raise it.

Bryer. Well, I knew you couldn't, if you depended on Spoyle. Nobody ever got any favors out 'o *him*. I'll have to take the furniture. I hate to do it, Mrs. Forest, but it's everybody for himself these times. There's an officer round the corner. But I thought I'd carry 'em out myself, as you mightn't like *strangers* round.

Sallie. (*Spiritedly.*) *Strangers!* What stranger could be so heartless as you are?

Bryer. Miss, don't be sassy. It won't do any good. (*B. takes the lamp from the table, and a chair, and carries them out L. Edith and Sallie fall into each others arms, R C, crying.*)

Bryer. (*Re-enters.*) They feel pooty bad. Well, I swow I don't blame them. I'd feel bad myself if I was turned out o' doors this cold weather. (*Takes up table and is carrying it toward the door, when he runs against Nick Boone, L C.*) Hello, young man, what do you mean by running against me that way?

Nick. (*C, with nonchalance.*) Hello, old man, what do you mean by getting in my way with that table? I didn't come to dine. (*Looks at the women, who do not notice his entrance.*)

Bryer. You're not liable to dine here, unless you feast your imagination a little.

Nick. Mister, I've fed my fancy till she's in prime, A No. 1, condition. She's clear as a bell. In fact, I think I can imagine without much strain on the organ just what you're up to now.

Bryer. (*Laughs.*) I'm up to this table just now.

Nick. (*Looks at women again.*) They don't seem to be in a hurry to recognize old friends here. Old gentleman, that won't go down.

Bryer. Yes it will. I measured the stairway.

Nick. See here, old fellow you'd better measure the stairway another time or two, and then get yourself measured for a coffin before you try to take that table down stairs. (*Attempts to take the table from Bryer's grasp. The noise attracts the attention of the women. Sallie screams and falls into Nick's arms, C.*)

Sallie. Is it you, Nick?

Nick. I think so. What do you say, Sallie?

Sallie. I'm so glad you've come. (*Withdraws a little.*)

Nick. Are you! I'll stay if you want me to. How do you do, Mrs. Forest?

Edith. Nick, you can't tell what joy it is to see old friends.

Nick. That's so. I can't tell. Can you, Sallie?

Sallie. You're just the same old Nick.

Nick. Whew! (*Prolonged whistle.*) Don't call names, Sallie, *Old Nick* sounds personal.

Sallie. Then I'll say *young* Nick. But you've come just in time.

Nick. Yes, the old gentleman said 3 o'clock.

Edith. The old gentleman! Who, Nick?

Nick. Your father! He sent me round to inquire about you.

Edith. Oh, did he! Dear father!

Nick. Who is this old scrub who wants to carry out the furniture? (*Looks round.*) Hang me if he hasn't taken that table. (*Re-enter Bryer, L.*)

Edith. He's the landlord!

Nick. Old executioner, where's that table?

Bryer. It's on the sidewalk. I'll take good care of it. (*Crosses and picks up a chair, R.*)

Nick. Drop that chair or I'll drop you.

Bryer. Young man, take care. Don't strike me; I'm the law.

Nick. You are the law, are you? Well, I'm one of the *prophets*. (*A pause.*) If you don't get out of this, I prophesy somebody will get hurt.

Edith. Nick, please don't provoke him.

Sallie. (*Aside to Nick.*) Nick, hit him.

Bryer. All right, my good fellow! Since you set yourself up as a protector of these women, just pay my little bill and I'll carry the things in again. It's only four dollars. Fork it over.

Nick. I will. (*Feels in all his pockets in vain.*) I'll—I'll write you a check.

Bryer. (*Insolemnly.*) Get out of my way! (*Picks up a chair, passes toward L. Nick wrests it from him and hurls him across the room to door, L.*)

Nick. Now get out, or I'll break your bones. I'll pay this before 4 o'clock.

Bryer. (*Aside. He's a dangerous fellow.*) You had better, or it will be worse for *them*. (*Exit L.*)

Nick. Now we're rid of that chap, I have good news for you, Mrs. Forest. Your father is coming. I think he is on the stairs now. He will tell you something. (*Enter Harvey L.*)

Edith. (*Rushes into his arms, L. C.*) My dear father, forgive me!

Harvey. Child, all is forgotten! Forgive my harshness which has added to your sorrow.

Edith. Father, don't accuse yourself. It was my fault.

Nick. (*Aside to Sallie, R.*) Sallie, don't you get a little lonesome living this way?

Sallie. (*Coy'y.*) Sometimes, Nick.

Nick. I should think you would try some other plan.

Sallie. I—I never was much at planning, Nick.

Harvey. Edith you have seen enough of sorrow. I have news for you. (*Steps to door L, and brings in Forest.*) I bring you a husband. I have found a son.

Edith. (*Greatly agitated.*) Is it indeed you, Charles, whom I thought dead long ago?

Forest. It is indeed I, dear wife. (*Clasps her in his arms, C.*) I thought it better to be dead to you than to live a reproach to you. I vowed no one should ever hear from me again until I could stand before my fellows a man. I return from the mines of the West with health and a fortune, after five years' hard toil. I have broken the cursed fetters which bound and ruined me. My old enemy sought his fortune with the multitude. We met in times of trial, and James Tuttle's timely help saved me.

Edith. Mr. Tuttle! His kindness we cannot repay. (*Fause.*) We shall part no more now, dear Charles.

Forest. Death alone will part us. But have you been suffering here alone? I heard that you were with your father, and supposed it true. What a villain I have been. Neglect took my precious child and has caused the mother many a pang. Can my future wipe out the past?

Harvey. Spend no time in idle reproaches. You did right to win our love and esteem by a long period of self-denial. I was too severe with you when you gave me your promise. Forgive me, my boy.

Forest. I have learned how to forgive.

Edith. Charles, we can yet be happy.

Harvey. The paths toward the setting sun are beautiful to the virtuous.

Nick. Sallie, what do you say to a joint stock company? You and I will be the only shareholders.

Sallie. Nick, do you remember the bill of particulars you gave me once about a husband's duties?

Nick. Sallie, don't be too hard on a fellow. What I have seen for sometime back has changed my mind a good deal. I won't mention that bill of particulars again if you won't.

Sallie. I'll not, Nick.

Nick. Then there's no further objection. (*Puts arm round her.*)

Harvey. He's a pretty good boy, Sallie.

Edith. And she is a good girl. I never shall forget you, Sallie.

Forest. Nor I. You've been true through prosperity and adversity. Edith, we will remember her.

Edith. Yes, while memory remains; for of nature's fairest treasures none is so fair as a friend in need.

ARRANGEMENT OF CHARACTERS.

C.

R. HARVEY, EDITH, FOREST, SALLIE, NICK. *L.*

CURTAIN.

THE ASSESSOR.

A humorous sketch illustrating the difficulties of an assessor in listing the property of a shrewd old farmer. Full of unexpected developments; 3 male and 2 female. Time, 15 m.

BORROWING TROUBLE.

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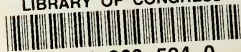
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